Start of Gertrude Wortzman Collection

AR 11681

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AR 11681 1/1 Gertrude Wortzmann Collection 1934-2003 Archives

AHC 185

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THE AUSTRIAN HERITAGE COLLECTION AT THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

AUSTRIAN-JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE: 15 WEST 16TH STREET, 4TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10011, TEL (212) 744 - 6400

We kindly ask you to answer the following questions in as much detail as possible, either in English or in German. If you need more space, please feel free to use additional sheets. If you don't know the answer to certain questions or don't want to answer for any reason, just go on to the next question.

NAME: GERTRUDE FRAGE WORTZMAN **DATE:** ~~DEC~~ JAN. 18/03

1. BEFORE MARCH 1938

1.1 Please describe your parental home.
(Did you live in an apartment or in a house? How many people lived there with you? Did you have servants? What language(s) were spoken in the household?)

APARTMENT, 6 PEOPLE PARENTS AND THREE SIBLINGS AND 1 SERVANT
GERMAN SPOKEN HOUSEHOLD
THE APARTMENT WAS REGARDED AS A VIRTUAL MUSEUM BY ALL WHO BEHELD IT.

1.2 Please tell us about your neighborhood (District in Vienna or area).
(What ethnic groups lived there? Religious life? Relationships between Jews and non-Jews? Relationships with neighbors?)

II., DISTRICT JEWISH
GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH JEWS AND A FEW NON JEWS.

1.3 What religious tradition existed in your family?
(Did you keep kosher, go to synagogue, observe holidays, etc.?)

KOSHER HOUSE, OBSERVED HOLIDAYS,
WENT TO SYNAGOGUE

1.4 Please, tell us about your friends and acquaintances ?
(Were they mostly Jewish or non-Jewish? Did you have any close non-Jewish friends?)

MOSTLY JEWISH, SOME NON JEWS

1.5 Were you affiliated with any political, social or religious organization?
(Youth Organizations, Zionist Organizations, Political Parties, other organizations)
If so, did you have any specific function?

I BELONGED TO BRITH ZION
IN THE XX, BECIRK 20, DISTRICT

1.6 Did you or your family encounter any anti-Semitism in Austria before March 1938?
(If so, please give details.)

WE DID.

1.7 What was your/ your family's reaction to Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933 and to Nazi activity in Austria in the early thirties? Did you/ they feel threatened by these events?

WE WERE ALL SCARED

2. FROM MARCH 1938 TO EMIGRATION - FROM EUROPE TO AMERICA

2.1 How was your time spent during and after the "Anschluss"? What was the impact of the "Anschluss" on you personally?

(Were you expelled from school/university? Did you or somebody in your family lose your/ their jobs? Were your apartments/houses looted? Were you (or members of your family) persecuted? Were you/ they forced to scrub the streets?)

In Vienna, on Nov. 11, 1938, during the Kristallnacht, the Nazis threw rocks through our windows, and we were forced to flee for our lives to a relatives apartment because we knew that our father was known to be a wealthy man and a collector of paintings, antiques, coins furniture, fine jewelry, stamps, and other collectibles which had high intrinsic value.

When we returned the next day, practically everything of value, including original paintings by Rembrandt van Rign, Maurice Utrillo and others, many valuable Persian Rugs that had covered the floors and the walls, Gobelin tapestries and the previously described collections had been looted.

After fleeing to Poland where my father had businesses including stores, the small balance of our personal wealth which we had been able to save was taken from us when we were forced into the ghetto. THEN JANOWSKA K.Z. CAMP AND THEN HIDDEN TIL RUSSIANS FREED US IN SUMMER 1944 AFTER WAR BACK TO VIENNA

MY FATHER AND MY BROTHER PERISHED IN NAZI DEATH CAMPS.

MY MOTHER MY SISTER AND I SURVIVED CONCENTRATION CAMPS, GHETTO'S AND HIDING

IN 1945 WE RETURNED TO VIENNA, PHISICALLY SICK AND MENTALLY EXHAUSTED, TO SEE IF WE COULD RECOUP SOME OF OUR EXPOPRIATED POSSESIONS LEFT IN THE DOROTHEUM AND OTHER PLACES, BUT WE COULD NOT FIND ANYTHING.

WE WERE SUPPORTED BY THE JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE AND BY OUR FAMILY IN AMERICA SINCE WE HAD NO MONEY, WE DECIDED THAT WE SHOULD GO TO AMERICA.

WE ARRIVED IN NY --> [We arrived in USA July 15, 1949]

Gertrude Wortzman Collection (AHC 185)

All items listed below are copies if not otherwise indicated:

1. Copy of QIII

2. Photos of Ms. Gertrude Frage and her family (her brother and father and mother)

MY BROTHER NORBERT FRAGE

MARRIED IN HOLLAND CANADA

FEBR. 1934
GERTRUDE FRAGE

MY MOTHER

MY FATHER HERMAN FRAGE
IN VIENNA, 1937

MY FATHER MYSELF BROTHER
AND SISTER 1934 VIENNA

End of Gertrude Wortzman Collection